

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims of the application as follows, by inserting the underlined matter, deleting the matter lined through and in brackets and adding the matter marked as “new”.

1 1. (Previously presented)A method of partially deboning a poultry wing separated from a
2 poultry carcass, the wing having a primary segment with a bone extending longitudinally
3 therethrough that was separated from a poultry carcass, a mid-wing segment having a pair of
4 bones extending longitudinally therethrough that are joined at an elbow joint to the bone of the
5 primary segment, and a tip segment joined at a tip joint to the bones of the mid-wing segment
6 and extending away from the tip joint, and an inside surface that faced the carcass and an
7 outside surface that faced away from the carcass, comprising:

8 suspending the poultry wing from its tip segment at a position away from the tip joint at
9 a protrusion in the tip segment,

10 advancing the suspended wing along a processing path with the outside surface of the
11 poultry wing facing one side of the processing path,

12 as the wing is advanced:

13 bending the primary segment of the wing at the elbow joint with respect to the
14 mid-wing segment of the wing laterally about an elbow guide positioned on the outside
15 surface of the poultry wing until the elbow joint is opened,

16 as the elbow joint is opened, stretching the tissue extending between the primary
17 segment and the mid-wing segment about the elbow joint,

18 separating the stretched tissue extending between the primary segment and the
19 mid-wing segment at the elbow joint at a position that exposes the end of the bone of
20 the primary segment and separates the primary segment from the mid-wing segment,
21 such that the tissue about the bone end of the primary segment tends to retract
22 from about the bone end and leave the bone end exposed.

1 2. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the step of advancing the wing comprises:
2 advancing the wing with the elbow joint extending forwardly in the processing path.

1 3. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the step of advancing the wing comprises:
2 advancing the wing with the elbow joint extending rearwardly in the processing path.

1 4. (Previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein
2 the step of suspending the poultry wing from its tip comprises wedging the tip segment
3 at the tip protrusion into a slot of a shackle.

1 5. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein
2 the step of advancing the suspended wing along a processing path comprises:
3 advancing the wing along a substantially rectilinear path toward a rotary guide,
4 placing the mid-wing segment of the wing in contact with the rotary guide,
5 advancing the wing in unison with and about the rotary guide, and

6 performing the steps of bending, stretching and separating the wing as the wing
7 advances with the rotary guide.

1 6. (Original) The method of claim 5, wherein
2 the step of advancing the wing in unison with the rotary guide comprises:
3 moving a positioning block in unison with the rotary guide, and
4 engaging the wing with the positioning block.

1 7. (Previously presented) The method of claim 5, wherein
2 the step of advancing the wing in unison with the rotary guide comprises:
3 advancing the wing along an arcuate path of approximately 180 degrees about an axis of
4 rotation of the rotary guide at a speed greater than the speed at which the wing is advanced
5 along the substantially rectilinear path.

1 8. (Previously presented) The method of claim 5 and further including the step of:
2 maintaining the mid-wing segment in contact with the rotary guide as the primary
3 segment is bent about the elbow guide until the elbow joint is opened and separated.

1 9. (Original) The method of claim 1, and after the primary wing segment has been
2 separated from the mid-wing segment, further including:

3 advancing the mid-wing segment and the tip segment along a second processing path,
4 as the mid-wing segment and tip segment are advanced along the second processing
5 path:

6 compressing the wing tip segment,
7 forcing the mid-wing segment laterally with respect to the tip segment, and
8 popping the bones of the mid-wing segment laterally from the tip segment,
9 such that the end of the bones of the mid-wing are exposed.

1 10. (Cancelled)

1 11. (Original) The method of claim 1, and further including the step of:

2 cooking the primary segment and the mid-wing segment after they have been separated
3 from each other, such that the ends of the bones of the segments protrude from the tissue
4 remaining on the bones, and are available to be grasped by the human hand without touching
5 the tissue remaining on the bones.

12. (Previously presented) A method of deboning a plurality of right poultry wings and left poultry wings separated from a poultry carcass, the right poultry wings having an inside surface that faced the right side of the poultry carcass and an outside surface that faced away from the poultry carcass, the left poultry wings having an inside surface that faced the left side of the poultry carcass and an outside surface that faced away from the poultry carcass, the poultry wings each having a primary segment that was separated from a poultry carcass with a bone extending longitudinally therethrough, a mid-wing segment having a pair of bones extending longitudinally therethrough that are joined at an elbow joint to the bone of the primary segment, and a tip segment joined at a tip joint to the bones of the mid-wing segment and extending beyond the tip joint, comprising:

suspending the poultry wings from their tip segments,

advancing the suspended wings in sequence along a processing path with the outside surfaces of the right wings facing one side of the processing path and with the outside surfaces of the left wings facing in the same direction as the outside surfaces of the right wings,

as the wings are advanced:

bending the primary segments of both right and left wings with respect to the mid-wing segments at the elbow joints about an elbow guide positioned on the outside surface of the poultry wings until the elbow joints are opened, and

separating the tissue extending between the primary segments and the mid-wing segments at the elbow joints to expose the elbow joints and to separate the primary wing segments from the mid-wing segments at the elbow joints.

13. (Cancelled)

14. (Currently amended) A method of partially deboning a plurality of right poultry wings and left poultry wings, the right poultry wings removed from the right side of a poultry carcass and the left poultry wings removed from the left side of a poultry carcass, each of the right and left poultry wings having an inside surface that faced a poultry carcass and an outside surface that faced away from a poultry carcass, a primary segment that was separated from a poultry carcass with a bone extending longitudinally therethrough, and a mid-wing segment having a pair of bones extending longitudinally therethrough that are joined at an elbow joint to the bone of the primary segment, comprising:

advancing the right wings and the left wings in sequence along a processing path with the outside surfaces of the right wings facing one side of the processing path and with the outside surfaces of the left wings facing in the same direction of the processing path as the outside surfaces of the right wings, and with the joints between the segments of the right wings facing oppositely along the processing path to the joints between the segments of the left wings, as the wings are advanced:

bending the primary segments of both right and left wings with respect to the mid-wing segments at the elbow joints about an elbow guide positioned on the outside surfaces of the poultry wings until the elbow joints are opened, and

separating the tissue extending between the primary segments and the mid-wing segments at the elbow joints to expose the elbow joints and to separate the primary wing segments from the mid-wing segments at the elbow joints.

15. (Previously presented) The method of claim 14, and after the primary wing segment has been separated from the mid-wing segment, further including:
moving the pair of bones of the mid-wing segment laterally, and
as the pair of bones are moved laterally popping the bones of the mid-wing segment laterally from the mid-wing segment,
such that the end of the bones popped from the mid-wing segment are exposed.

16. (New) A method of separating the segments of a plurality of right poultry wings and left poultry wings, the right poultry wings having been removed from the right side of a poultry carcass and the left poultry wings having been removed from the left side of a poultry carcass, each of the right and left poultry wings having an inside surface that faced a poultry carcass and an outside surface that faced away from a poultry carcass, a primary segment that was separated from a poultry carcass with a bone extending longitudinally therethrough, and a mid-wing segment having a pair of bones extending longitudinally therethrough that are joined at an elbow joint to the bone of the primary segment, comprising:

advancing left and right poultry wings in sequence along a processing path with the outside surfaces of the right and left poultry wings facing the same direction and the elbow joints of the right wings facing opposite to the elbow joints of the left wings,
as the right and left poultry wings are advanced along the processing path moving the outside surfaces of the right and left poultry wings at their elbow joints along an elbow guide that extends along the processing path,

15 as the outside surfaces of the right and left poultry wings move along the elbow guide
16 progressively bending the right and left poultry wings at their elbow joints about the elbow guide
17 positioned on the outside surface of the poultry wings to open the elbow joints, and
18 separating the primary segments from the mid-wing segments of the left and right poultry
19 wings from one another at the openings in the elbow joints.